

CLAIMS:

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A computerized method for managing supply of replacement parts used for servicing a piece of equipment, said method comprising:

providing a database of parts supply data indicative of availability of replacement parts;

5 providing an input/output device at a service site in communication with the database;

transmitting from the service site to said database a computer-readable order, wherein said order is configured to identify respective parts and quantity thereof to be made available for said service site;

10 processing said order relative to the data stored in the database to determine availability of the parts identified in the order;

gathering replacement parts for the service site; and

updating said database to log transactions that occur in connection with said replacement parts for the service site.

15 2. The computerized method of claim 1 further comprising transmitting a confirmation message to the service site indicating availability of the parts identified in the order and expected delivery date therefor.

20 3. The computerized method of claim 1 further comprising transmitting a message to the service site indicative of part unavailability when the order identifies parts not presently available, wherein said message includes respective links indicative of options regarding an unavailable part.

25 4. The computerized method of claim 2 wherein the respective links indicate substitute parts for the unavailable part.

5. The computerized method of claim 3 wherein the respective links indicate alternative suppliers for an unavailable part.

6. The computerized method of claim 1 wherein said updating step comprises scanning a code associated with a part being ordered.

7. The computerized method of claim 6 wherein upon scanning the code associated with the part being ordered, a Web page is provided to appropriate supply personnel, wherein said Web page includes a respective data field to be filled by said personnel to log a transaction for that part.

8. The computerized method of claim 7 wherein the data field is selected from the group comprising a part sale, part return, and part exchange.

9. The computerized method of claim 1 wherein the order includes a part identifier selected from the group comprising part name, part number, part description and visual representation thereof.

10. The computerized method of claim 9 wherein the order is processed relative to the data stored in the database upon finding a match for the part identifier in the order.

11. The computerized method of claim 10 wherein, in the absence of an exact match for the part identifier, suggesting potential matches for the part identifier in the order.

12. The computerized method of claim 1 wherein the order further includes an account identifier and wherein upon fulfillment of that order, costs associated with that order are charged against that account.

13. The computerized method of claim 1 wherein in the event a part is no longer manufactured, transmitting a message to the service site suggesting a superseding replacement kit for servicing a respective assembly.

14. A system for managing supply of replacement parts used for servicing a piece of equipment, said system comprising:

a database of parts supply data indicative of availability of replacement parts;

an input/output device at a service site in communication with the database,
5 said device configured to transmit from the service site to said database a computer-readable order over a communications network, wherein said order allows to identify respective parts and quantity thereof to be made available for said service site;

a processor configured to process said order relative to the data stored in the database to determine availability of the parts identified in the order; and

10 an update module in said database to log transactions that occur in connection with said replacement parts for the service site.

15 15. The system of claim 14 wherein said update module is coupled to a scanner configured to scan a code associated with a part being ordered when the scanner and/or part are placed proximate to one another by a supply personnel.